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American Embassy
Paris
November 19, 1953

Secret - Security Information

Dear Doug:

I am addressing this letter to you in the hope this is not an irregular way of handling it since you are not only familiar with the subject matter involved but also know what reliance to place on de Staercke. I assume it will require early action by the Department in conjunction with the British and French and that, in regard to the French, it will be handled through Ambassador Bonnet and our own Embassy in Paris.

The letter to me and the attached copy of his letter to Alphand are self-explanatory.

He has expanded in personal conversation with me on the subject. He would himself strongly favor the issuance of a declaration in regard to U.K.-EDC association at the conclusion of the Bermuda Conference and the making public as soon thereafter as practicable of the treaty arrangement. The latter would require very early action by the EDC Committee and the British Government. Alphand informs me he is still negotiating with Christopher Steel for some extension of the British commitment. Apparently Steel has referred the affair to his Government. If the answer is favorable Alphand will then be ready to bring the text within a short time to the attention of the EDC Interim Committee. If the reply is unfavorable the affair will have to be referred back to the French Government. In this connection I might observe that the French Government will probably continue to ask for further consideration until such time as the British Government makes it known it will go no further.

De Staercke realizes it is too late to do anything in this respect to influence the present debate in the Belgian Chamber on EDC ratification, but he says that no action will be taken in the Belgian Senate until there is such a written agreement. He has taken the personal responsibility with Van Zeeland and the other party leaders of guaranteeing to them that the eventual Articles of Association will be substantially as he has outlined them. He thinks this assurance will be sufficient to enable the EDC proponents to press ahead with the ratification of the treaty within the next week. He feels that these unusual personal assurances must be followed up within the shortest possible period by a written agreement.

The Honorable
Douglas MacArthur, II,
Counselor,
Department of State,
Washington 25, D. C.

Secret - Security Information

MacArthur, Douglas, II

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I shall remain in touch with de Staercke and Alphand on this subject but I think there should be an initiative from the Department within a short time that will set the necessary machinery in motion between the U.S., U.K. and France if some declaration in this sense is to be made at the Bermuda Conference. Obviously, the other participants in EDC will also have to be consulted through the Interim Committee.

I know there will be many differences of opinion as to timing. For my own count, I would be in favor of following de Staercke's suggestions, chiefly for the reason that he has proved to be the most adroit, devoted, and useful foreigner on the working level, with the possible exception of Alphand, in sponsoring the principles of EDC and EPC.

In the interest of speed, I have not had these papers translated since they have just come to my hands and, by dispatching them at once, they may reach you by the week end.

I have sent copies of this letter and correspondence to Ted Achilles.

With warmest regards,

Ever yours,

David Bruce

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DB:GES